COCHIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Monday, *the* *22nd of February 1932.* / *10th of Kumbham 1107.*

The House met at half past Eleven of the clock with the President in the Chair. Messrs. M. A. Chakko, K. G. Nayar, Joseph Pettah, M. Krishna Menon, A. I. Mani, K. T. Mathew, A. R. Menon and P. I. Varugis were absent.

Swearing in of new Members.

Messrs. K. P. Kannan Nayar, (Government Advocate and Law Officer) K. Krishna Pisharodi, (Comptroller of Accounts) and P. V. Raphael (Registrar of Panchayats) took and subscribed the oath of allegiance.

Opening Statement by the President.

President.—Hon'ble Members of the Legislative Council,—We meet to-day in a period of mourning and under the shadow of a great loss to the State. His Highness, the Ex-Raja, whose loss we are mourning to-day and the benefits which he conferred on the State during the period of his rule are too well-known to every Hon'ble Member of this House to require recapitulation from me. As a tribute of respect to His Highness' memory, the Leader of the House will move a Resolution of Condolence which will be seconded by the Hon'ble the Deputy President and I would then ask the Hon'ble Members to pass that Resolution standing. Then we will adjourn for the day.

Condolence Resolution.

His Highness the late Retired Maharaja of Cochin.

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—I rise to perform the solemn duty, to me personally a sacred and religious duty, of moving the following Resolution:—

"This Council desires to express, with due respect, its deep sorrow at the irreparable loss sustained by the State by the lamented demise of His Highness Raja Sri Sir Rama Varmah, G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E., the retired Maharaja of Cochin, and its sincere sympathy with His Highness the Maharaja and other Members of the Ruling Family, and His late Highness' consort and children, in their sad bereavement."

No speech is necessary to commend this Resolution to the whole-hearted acceptance of this House; when the heart is full

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of grief and emotions choke you, words fail to come out. Do I know anything more about the achievements and services to the State of the late Royal Saint, the Raja Rishi, both as a Ruler and as a man, than the Members of this House, who are the representatives of all classes and creeds of the citizens of the State, themselves know? Did not His late Highness win the deep and intense affection of more than three generations of the people of the State, and is He not enshrined in their hearts? Mother earth has, since the beginning of history, produced great men who had left behind them marks of solid work done towards the progress of mankind. What is the cause of the greatness of the Great? It is the spirit of selflessness and self-repression, that pervaded their every act from birth to death and the dedication of their lives to the service of humanity. Every one, known to history as a really great man, realised that the object of life was not to utilise the advantages of birth, or the gifts, intellectual and physical, that God gave him for the enjoyment of what we pragmatic men know as good things or material pleasures of life, or for the accumulation of wealth for their nearest kith and kin to enjoy such pleasures. There is no circumscribed limit to the circle of the near and dear of the really great. All those who come in contact with them are near and dear to them. Truth is their God and their only God. (സത്യംപരംധീമഹി). They alone have answered the scriptural question: "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and lose his soul in exchange"!

Sir, judged from this standard of greatness, who will deny His late Highness a high place, a very high place, among the ranks of great men? Born of an illustrious Kshatriya family, tracing its origin to the ancient Solar dynasty (സൂര്യവംശം) to which belonged a line of kings like Sree Harischandra and Sree Ramachandra personifications of truth (സത്യം) and justice (ധർമ്മം). At a critical time in the history of India that syncronised with the Great Indian Mutiny of 1857, when she passed from one stage of progress and civilisation to another nurtured by a highly cultured and affectionate mother, educated by the best teachers of the day according to the methods then in vogue in Sanskrit literature, logic, grammar and Indian philosophy (supplimented afterwards by a course of study in English), our late Ruler was destined to leave his mark in the world as a Leader or Ruler of men. It does not matter much whether one is called on to rule over one million men or three hundred millions. It is the spirit and sense of responsibility which one brings to bear on his rule that really matters. Conscious of the fact that, one day or other, he will be called on by

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Providence to rule over Cochin, His late Highness worked hard to equip himself for his responsible task and when he ascended the Musnad he had a clear conception of his duties and also a programme to carry them out. It will be presumptuous on my part to attempt now at making a catalogue of the services that he rendered to the State and her people during the long period of nearly two decades of righteous rule. Suffice it to say, that he identified himself heart and soul with his people. Their interests were his interests. The history of his reign is writ large in the record of the phenominal progress that our little State made during his reign, and the name and fame that he secured for her as a model State, a very efficiently administrated State. Corruption he wiped out root and branch from the service. Cheap popularity he coveted not. Unreasonable unpopularity he treated with contempt. Chicanery, hypocrisy, flattery and opportunism, he loathed like poison. Mistakes of head he excused, but never those of heart. Fools he tolerated but knaves never. Protect the righteous and punish the unrighteous was the motto of his rule (ധർമ്മപരിപാലനം ഉണ്ണി ശ്രമം).

To his family motto "HONOUR IS OUR FAMILY TREASURE" he added his personal motto "PURE BE MY LIFE FOR EVER" and pure it really was *till the end.*

He allowed free access to his subjects, rich and poor, and heard patiently what they had to say. He travelled constantly and freely in all parts of the State and knew every nook and corner of it. He acquired a mastery in the details of administration and kept himself in close touch with every branch of its working. No officer dared approach him unless he was posted with all details. He infused into all ranks of service, a strong sense of duty and a spirit of love and service to the people. No officer in the service, either superior or subordinate, worked as systematically and throughly as he did. Getting up at 4 in the morning and retiring at 9-30 in the night, His late Highness spent the whole day except the few hours taken for bathing, praying, partaking of meals and exercise, in hard and intellectual labour, selfless labour. I cannot describe the ideals that he always kept in his mind in performing his duties, more impressively than in his own words when he addressed the 4th Session of the All India Philosophical Congress on an historical occasion:—

"The Sovereign of Hindu political theory is not the 'Oriental Despot' of Western imagination, but a constitutional ruler, at once sanctioned and limited by a code of spiritual laws which he could only enforce but not infringe or even amend".

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Kindly permit me, Sir, to mention one or two anecdotes to illustrate the spirit and method by which he controlled the administration and identified himself with his subjects whom he always addressed as "My Beloved Subjects".

There is a small village, known as Vadavucode, six miles to the east of the Hill Palace and surrounded on all sides by Travancore. His Highness took a drive one evening up to Puthenkurusu, a Travancore village. The road ended there. He got down and walked on foot to Vadavucode, a distance of two miles, not then served by a metalled road, visited the Police Station, examined the Crime Register and made some remarks in the Visitors' Book. By that time, the villagers came to know of his presence and approached him. They complained that no attention had been paid for some years to the tanks in the village, that they were covered with silt and that there was not sufficient water for cattle to drink and villagers to bathe. He accompanied them and minutely inspected the tanks one by one and found that the villagers' complaints were true. His indignation knew no bounds. Immediately on his return to the Palace, he wrote out and despatched a stiff order to the Diwan and at the same time asked the Private Secretary to send a similar order to the Diwan Peishkar. This created a stir at the time in the official circles. Then all officers had to confess their guilt and every one of the tanks was repaired within a month. Since then, inspection of tanks and prompt attention to their repairs became one of the religious duties of the officers concerned and continued to be so ever after during his regime. Even to this day, the villagers of Vadavucode cherish with gratitude the memory of that visit.

In another case, a poor Ezhuva widow, Naithy by name, did not get a *pattah* during the General Settlement for 10 or 15 cents of land registered in her name in the pre-settlement period. She complained to the Settlement officers and also to the Diwan, but her application was rejected on the ground that no pre-settlement registry in her name was forthcoming. The poor woman approached her Sovereign as a last resort. This was 27 years ago. His Highness believed the truth of her story and ordered a further searching enquiry. A search was made and the missing record was traced out from some office which I do not now remember. The poor woman got her *pattah* at once. Thereafter, her case became a bye-word for all officers for a long time and when a similar registry complaint had to be inquired into, the case of Naithy was remembered. Registry complaints were for some time referred to by officers as Naithy complaints (നൈത്തി ആക്ഷേപം).

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Another instance, where His Highness never allowed personal considerations to prevail over public considerations, is that of a prosecution and conviction of a Shikari of his on a charge, I believe, of abduction. His Highness was interested in shooting around the forests near Kanjirappilli, with half a dozen good Shikaris. One of them was concerned in an abduction case, and the Police and Magistracy showed signs of hesitation to book him and arrest him. His Highness, when he came to know of this, became very indignant and at once ordered that the majesty of "rule of law" should prevail, let the person be his Shikari or anybody else. The man was eventually prosecuted and convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

Many more instances of this nature can be quoted. But it is for the future historian of His Highness to narrate them.

As one, true to the traditions of an Indian Ruler, His late Highness was loyal to the core to His Majesty the King Emperor and the Paramount Power. But he guarded jealously the rights of the State and her privileges and maintained his dignity as a Ruler. His services to the State won the appreciation of successive Viceroys of India and Governors of Madras, and, though in point of area, population and revenue, our State is only a second class one, His Highness' case was treated as special and unique, and he was raised to the Knight Grand Commandership of both the Orders of "Star of India" and "Companion of India" (G. C. S. I. and G. C. I. E.). It is only rulers of first class States, like Hydrabad, Mysore, Kashmir, etc., and Viceroys, and Secretaries of States, that are honoured usually with both these highest titles. Not being satisfied with theconferring of these two honours, His Majesty the King Emperor marked his special appreciation of His Highness as a successful Ruler by raising his personal Salute from 17 to 19. He enjoyed the personal friendship of all Viceroys, Governors, Executive Council Members, British Residents and others in high position, with whom he came into contact. He was held in high esteem by the Imperial Government and on one occasion—the period of inception of the Minto-Morley Reforms—he was consulted on important constitutional problems affecting the whole of India, and he gave his advice freely and frankly.

Again, true to the traditions of the great Hindu Rulers whose names shine as stars in our Puranas, like Bharatha, Prithivi, Sibhi and others, he resolved to renounce the throne and all the pomp, power and pelf attached to it, when he passed the age of 60. The desire to retire and to lead a calm and quiet life and to continue his studies of different branches of Indian philosophy was always foremost in

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his mind; this is what he himself expressed at a later stage in his address already alluded to by me above.

"Every stage or estate in life has its appropriate cycle of duties to perform; and it is only by the faithful performance of the duties of each station that a man can qualify himself for the enlightenment which is the foundation of liberation. * * * The meaning of Karma Yoga is the consecration of life to the service of God and man; and he who tries to be a Sanyasin without performing his earthly duties, builds without foundation. The Hindu ideal of renunciation is not negative, but positive. It demands the complete and faithful fulfilment of one's duties before one can be fit for Gnana and Moksha.

Dharma widens the bounds of selfhood, enables man to transcend the limits of his own finitude, and gradually tends to the practical indentification of the self with the world. This is a spiritual process in which every available help is to be sought out and enlisted in the shape of action or forbearance".

He had the rare boldness to translate his ideal of life into action in his 62nd year, while still in the enjoyment of robust health and vigour. When his private correspondence sees the light of day in good time in the near or distant future, you will find letters written by Ex-Viceroys like Lord Curzon, Ex-Governors of Madras, like Lords Ampthil and Carmichael, Ex-British Residents like Sir James Thompson, and his own Ex-Diwans like Sir P. Rajagopala Chariar, to dissuade him from his resolve to abdicate. I shall not be disclosing any confidence if I say that Lord Curzon even went to the extent of saying that if his Lordship were then in India, he would not have allowed His Highness to abdicate. His own subjects assembled in large numbers and begged of him to reconsider his decision. But he stood adamantine in his resolve, and courageously carried it out, and it is a great consolation to all his subjects, friends and admirers that he enjoyed the benefit of his action by leading 17 years of peaceful, happy and calm life. Thus, he was a very great man, one of the greatest men that lived in the 19th and 20th centuries. He was a good man, a God's good man. Though an orthodox Hindu Kshatriya, his general outlook of religion was universal and broad. Though not a Christian, he manifested in his life and action the true Christian spirit of suffering and sacrifice for the sake of humanity and of loving the distressed and the poor. Though not a Mussalman, he loved his Muslim subjects and their religion. Though not a Brahmin, he was conversant more thoroughly with the teachings of Vedas and Upanishads than even a learned Brahmin Pundit. Though a very hard taskmaster and strict disciplinarian, he was kind and considerate to his officers and servants, high and low, who loved their work and thereby showed their loyalty to him. He always treated them as his colleagues and co-operators in the task of

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administration. His philosophy and general outlook of life cannot be expressed more effectively than in the following quotations from the address alluded to by me twice before:—

"Indeed to the man who has completely mastered the unruly passions and gained complete detachments from the objects of sense, there is no need for further spiritual exercises, and he need not wait till death for Moksha. The true ascetic, therefore, has no need for horse-hair or mortification of the flesh. He has fulfilled all the duties he owed the world and in and through this process of conscientious living, transcended his narrow self.

The common notion of a personal God—the God of the ordinary ethical religions— is superseded by the idea of a superpersonal Divine principle of which all of us are embodiments. The Hindu moral order is not a monarchy, but a spiritual democracy of souls whose numerical distinctness is no doubt phenomenal, and will ultimately be transcended in a higher unity in the absolute unity of God and man".

Yes, he believed in the Divinity of man. Believing so, his sole goal in life was to maintain the purity of that Divinity and hence his Motto "PURE BE MY LIFE FOR EVER". Was it not pure from beginning to end? He made no commission or omission in his long life for which he had subsequently to repent. His conscience was pure, pure as a cloudless sky. This purity followed him up to the end. The sun was about to set, and he was waiting for the red hues of the dusk to disappear, to perform his evening Sandya, his evening prayers. The Sandya, morning, noon and evening prayers of an orhodox Hindu is intense meditation on that Adorable Blissful form of Divinity which is in our heart as conscience, and a devotional prayer to that Divinity to illumine all our faculties. The night ushered in ,the lamp, the Hindu emblem of Heaven's light, was lihgted. He offered his Sandya prayers standing, moved and sat on his couch, his attendant gave him his usual medicine, when he smilingly enquired if he had any more medicine to take, he perspired lightly, and breathed his last, lying face upwards and meditating on that Divinity. Can a purer and more peaceful death be conceived? Was not such a peaceful end the appropriate reward of God for his purity? His loving brothers, nephews and grand nephews performed his last rites with devotion, in accordance with Sastras; and a host of His late subjects, numbering over thousands, of all castes and creeds, paid their last respects and homage to him at the funeral.

May the light that guided him in the path of righteousness for the long period of 80 years, shed its effulgence on this land and remain as a beacon light to guide his successors for all time to come in the noble task of ruling this land.

May the example of his rich life shine as a pole-star in the firmament over mother earth to show its light and guide us in the critical times through which we are now passing.

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His ashes lie buried in a restful corner of mother earth, with a fresh plantain plant planted over, with a light burning incessnatly. May the memory of his life be planted in the hearts of all, may it bear fruits of good will and love, and may the lamp of learning lighted by him shine for ever to illumine our dear Cochin.

MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Sir,

"ശൈശവമഭ്യസ്യവിദ്യാനാം
യൌവ്വനെവിഷയൈഷിണാം.
വാൽകെമുനിവൃത്തിനാം
യൊഗെനാന്തതനുത്യജാം".

Solar Princes devoted their childhood to education, their youth to the enjoyment of temporal power and their declining years to an ascetic life (to a residence in the forest), finally closing their worthy lives in a state of rapt communion.

Sir, I rise to second the Resolution. After the elaborate and the lucid speech of the Leader of the House I am afraid I have not much to say.

I propose to view the whole life of the late Maharaja in three different stages:—First, from his birth 1028 to 1071 a period of active study and preparation for his future work as the Ruler. Second stage as the Ruler from 1071 to 1090. Third, after abdication from 1090 to death till 1107.

His Highness the late Rama Varmah succeeded to the Musnad in 1071. In the next year His Highness paid his first visit to Madras. In 1897 the Raja was created a Knight Commander of the Order of the Star of India. In 1900 the State was honoured for the first time by a visit from His Excellency the then Viceroy Lord Curzon. Towards the close of 1902 His Highness made an extended tour in Upper India, and attended the Coronation Darbar at Delhi, when His Highness was invested with the Insignia of the Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire. In the next year His Highness made a smaller tour in Southern India, which was concluded by a visit to His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore in 1904. The latter returned this visit in the following year of which I make mention here as being unique in the history of the State. In December 1906 His Highness had the honour of paying his respects to Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales in Madras. In the same year the Raja's salute was raised to 19 guns.

The remarkable progress that the State has made in all directions can be seen from the following:—

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